

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USINT CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 091206

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO BONN MOSCOW HELSINKI VIENNA
TEL AVIV USNMR SHAPE ANKARA COPENHAGEN LISBON LONDON LUXEMBOURG
OSLO OTTAWA PARIS REYKJAVIK ROME THE HAGUE EC BRUSSELS NATO
USCINCEUR JIDDA FROM BRUSSELS MAY 11

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRUSSELS 2618

DEPT PASS US INTERESTS CAIRO

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, XF

SUBJECT: EC-9 MIDEAST EXPERTS MEETING

REF: BONN 6471

1. SUMMARY. AT EC-9 MIDEAST EXPERTS MEETING ON MAY 21
ITALIANS WILL PRESENT PROPOSAL FOR EUROPEAN ACTION TO REHABILITATE
SUEZ AREA. ITALIANS REPORTEDLY CLAIM PRESIDENT NIXON SUPPORTS
PROPOSAL. END SUMMARY

2. ACCORDING TO FONOFF DIRECTOR MIDDLE EAST AFFAIRS, EC-9 MIDDLE
EAST EXPERTS MEETING MENTIONED IN REFTEL WILL TAKE PLACE MAYNYWQM
ITALIANS ARE TO PRESENT WRITTEN REPORT ON PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP SUEZ
REGION OF EGYPT. DIRECTOR TOLD EMBOFF ON MAY 8 THAT, ACCORDING TO
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SOURCE IN ITALIAN FONOFF, PLAN ORIGINATED BY FONMIN MEDICI, WHO CONVINCED THAT EC-9 SHOULD DO MORE IN MIDDLE EAST AND THAT, SINCE PROGRESS BLOCKED ON POLITICAL SIDE, EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO AMELIORATE SITUATION ECONOMICALLY.

3. PLAN, WHICH SO FAR HAS BEEN PRESENTED ONLY IN GENERAL TERMS TO EC-9, CALLS FOR INVESTMENT OF \$500 MILLION PER YEAR FOR TEN YEARS TO REHABILITATE SUEZ AREA. MONEY WOULD BE PROVIDED BY CONSORTIUM OF EUROPEAN AND ARAB CONCERNS, POSSIBLY INCLUDING FRENCH, ITALIAN, AND SAUDI, AMONG OTHERS. EC-9 GOVERNMENTS WOULD TAKE ON MUCH ON INTEREST COSTS OF FINANCING. THREE TOWNS ON CANAL (PORT SAID, EL ISMAILIA, AND SUEZ) WOULD BE DEVELOPED. CANAL ITSELF WOULD BE REHABILITATED OR REPLACED WITH NEW CANAL. POSSIBLY BOTH CANALS WOULD BE USED IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE TRAFFIC IN OPPOSITE DIRECTIONS. ACCORDING TO BELGIAN EMBASSY' S SOURCE IN ITALIAN FONOFF, MEDICI REPORTEDLY GOT FAVORABLE REACTIONS TO IDEA FROM SIDQI WHEN LATTER WAS EGYPTIAN PRIME MINISTER, BUT IT IS NOW UNCLEAR WHAT EGYPTIAN POSITION WOULD BE. (DIRECTOR, HOWEVER, CITED TO EMBOFF PRESS REPORT QUOTING SADAT AS OPPOSING SECOND CANAL.) IN ADDITION MEDICI REVIEWED PROPOSAL FOR ISRAELIS, WHO NON- COMMITAL.

4. BELGIAN UN MISSION HAS REPORTED THAT PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI AND MEDICI ALSO PRESENTED PROPOSAL TO WALDHEIN AND EGYPTIAN FONMIN ZAYYAT DURING VISIT TO NEW YORK IN LATE APRIL AND THAT THEY CLAIMED THAT PRESIDENT NIXON HAD EXPRESSED APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL IN CONVERSATION IN WASHINGTON.

5. BELGIAN ME DIRECTOR WILL CHAIR MAY 21 MEETING. HE IS CONCERNED THAT EC-9 NOT TAKE POSITION WHICH WOULD MAKE US EFFORTS FOR SOLUTION IN MIDDLE EAST MORE DIFFICULT AND WOULD LIKE TO KNOW US VIEW OF ITALIAN PLAN.

6. PLEASE ADVISE.

STRAUSZ- HUPE
UNQUOTE RUSH

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